NATURAL NEWS

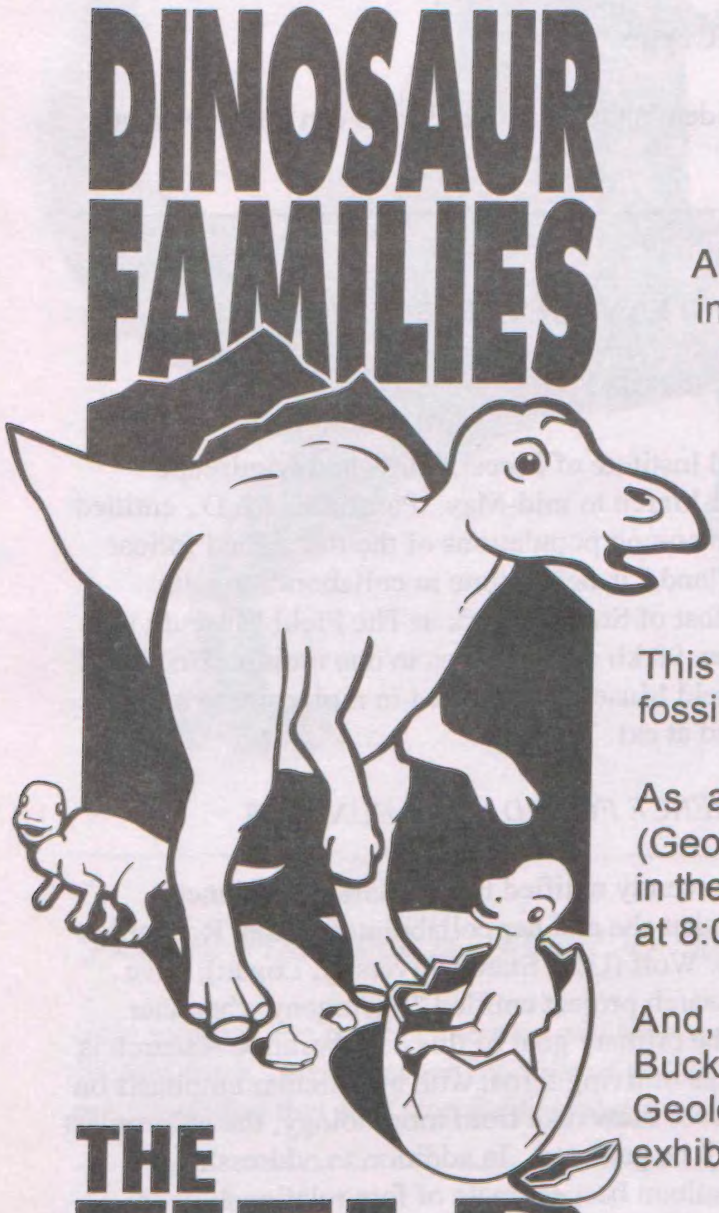
The Field Museum
Exploring
The Earth And Its
People

May 16, 1997

STAFF PREVIEW

All staff and volunteers are cordially invited to attend the exciting exhibit preview of Dinosaur Families on

Friday, May 23, 1997
8:00am - 10:00am



This exhibit tells the story of the greatest fossil discovery of the last 50 years!

As a special feature, Gene Dillenburg (Geology) will be giving a preview lecture in the Webber Resource Center beginning at 8:00am.

And, from 8:30am - 10:00am, Greg Buckley and Gene Dillenburg, both from Geology, will be available inside the exhibit to answer any questions.

Refreshments will be served outside the entrance of the exhibit, which is located on the east side off Stanley Field Hall.

Hope to see you there!

FAY HARTOG-LEVIN TO BE VICE PRESIDENT OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS

I am pleased to announce that **Fay Hartog-Levin** will assume the duties of Vice President for External Relations effective may 15, 1997. Fay has been working with us since January on a variety of Campus projects. Fay comes to us from a long career representing public bodies, school districts and universities, and is well acquainted with the public process. She will be responsible for increasing and improving all of the Museum's relationships and collaborations with elected officials, public officials, public bodies and other agencies.

John McCarter

Editor's note: Fay is presently located in the President's Office complex and can be reached at ext. 342.

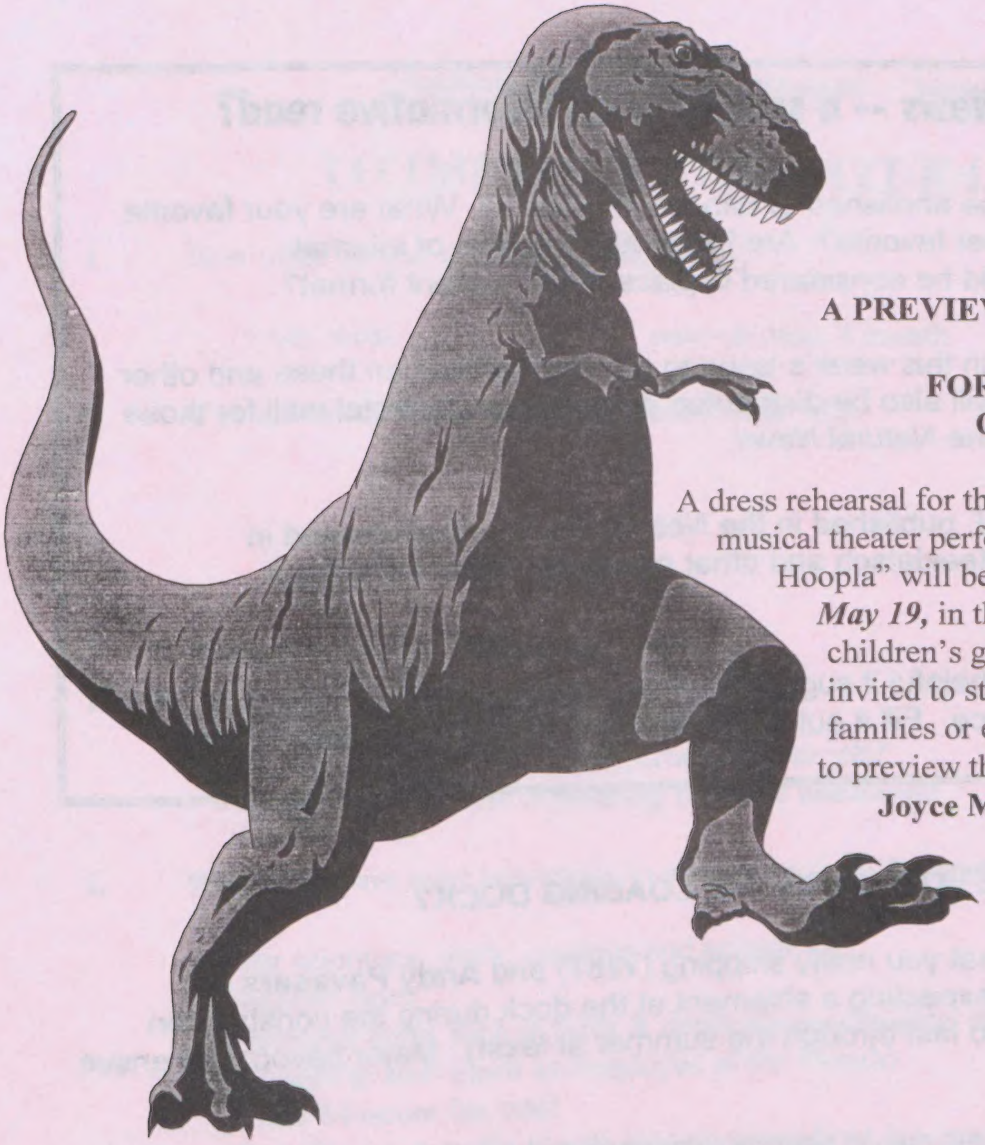
CENTER FOR EVOLUTIONARY AND ENVIRONMENTAL BIOLOGY

VISITOR IN BOTANY

Stefan Zoller, a Ph.D. student at the Swiss Federal Institute of Forest, Snow and Landscape Research (WSL), will be at the museum from mid-March to mid-May. Part of his Ph.D., entitled "Investigation of the genetic variability within and among populations of the threatened foliose lichen Lobaria pulmonaria (L.) Hoffm. in Switzerland," is being done in collaboration with Assistant Curator **François Lutzoni** (Botany). Most of Stefan's work at The Field Museum is in the Biochemistry lab where he generated more than 90 kb of sequences in one month. He would be very interested in meeting researchers at the Field Museum interested in molecular genetic approaches to conservation. Stefan can be reached at ext. 721.

PRYER RECEIVES NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION FUNDING

Assistant Curator **Kathleen Pryer** (Botany) was recently notified by the National Science Foundation (Division of Environmental Biology) that she and her collaborators, Alan R. Smith (University of California at Berkeley) and Paul G. Wolf (Utah State University, Logan), have been awarded a total of $225,619 to support a research project entitled "Phylogeny, character evolution, and diversification of extant ferns." The primary goal of this collaborative research is to investigate further the phylogenetic relationships of living ferns, with a particular emphasis on the basal groups whose relationships remain elusive. New data from morphology, the chloroplast atpB gene, and the nuclear 18S and 26S genes will be gathered. In addition to addressing phylogenetic questions, this study will use the resultant best estimate of fern relationships to work towards understanding patterns and sequences of character evolution. Through comparative studies of morphology and development they will explore hypotheses about the evolution of selected morphological characters, especially those that may have been correlated to the Mesozoic radiation and morphological diversification of "polypodiaceous" ferns.



A PREVIEW PERFORMANCE

FOR DINO LOVERS OF ALL AGES

A dress rehearsal for the summer Dinosaur Families musical theater perfor-mance, "Heirlooms and Hoopla" will be held at ***7:00 p.m. Monday, May 19,*** in the Sea Mammals area by the children's gift store. Staff members are invited to stay or come back with their families or even bring the neighbor kids to preview this play. Please RSVP to **Joyce Matuszewich** (x658).

Feeding Pigeons in the Park? -- NOT on the northeast terrace, please!

This summer, the northeast terrace will be in greater use with the "Dino Dig" activity center located there. We expect an increase of visitor traffic along the terrace to the North door. We are requesting that staff stop feeding pigeons and other birds at that location. Thank you.

PAUL BAKER TALKS BIRDS

Paul Baker, Development Department, gave two bird sound workshops last weekend when not participating in the Spring Birdcount. At North Park Village members of Chicago Audubon learned about birding by ear. Then Paul, Board Member at Ryerson, participated in the Smith Symposium, an annual series of lectures and workshops about nature.

The *Natural News* -- a snooze or an informative read?

Should the *Natural News* be abolished or can we improve it? What are your favorite features, what are your least favorite? Are there other models of internal communications that should be considered in place of the current format?

A questionaire is included in this week's issue to get your opinion on these and other issues. The questionaire will also be distributed through departmental mail for those staff who truly never read the *Natural News*.

Results will be summarized, published in the *Natural News* and discussed in Administrative Docket, Kaffeeklatsch and other meetings. (How's this for a performance review?)

Naturally it would be most helpful if suggestions for positive change were made. But in any case, this is your chance. Fill it out and mail it in -- to **Carolyn Klyce,** Editor, *Natural News.*

ARE YOU USING THE LOADING DOCK?

Reminder: It is essential that you notify shipping (x287) and **Andy Pavasars** in Facilities (x280) if you are expecting a shipment at the dock during the construction period (which is expected to last through the summer at least). Major havoc may ensue if you forget.

THE PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT
WISHES TO CONGRATULATE THE APRIL
EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH:

CLAY TURNER,
VISITOR SERVICE

AND
APRIL NOMINEES:

EDDIE REDWOOD, HOUSEKEEPING
STEVE GRISSOM, SECURITY
WENDELL DAVIS, SECURITY

THEIR EXCEPTIONAL TEAMWORK AND
OUTSTANDING CUSTOMER SERVICE IS GREATLY
APPRECIATED.

DIANE WHITE, PUBLIC SERVICE

Questionaire for Staff & Volunteers -- May 16, 1997

TO IMPROVE THE *NATURAL NEWS*

1. How often do you read the *Natural News?*

___ every week ___ once or twice a month ___ rarely or never

2. If you checked "rarely or never," please state why.

3. When you read the *Natural News,* do you

___ read all or almost all the articles?
___ read only those articles that pertain to your job?
___ read whatever looks interesting from the headlines?

3. What topics are *most* interesting to you? (Check all that apply.)

___ the scientists' work, comings and goings
___ exhibit news
___ personal items such as birth & death announcements, artist's gallery openings, etc.
___ awards to staff (such as Employee of the Month)
___ Field Museum fan mail
___ benefits (such as the Health Fair or news about insurance)
___ important notices of changes in the Museum, policies, current issues?
___ other -- specify below

4. What topics are *least* interesting to you? (Check all that apply.)

___ the scientists' work, comings and goings
___ exhibit news
___ personal items such as birth & death announcements, artist's gallery openings, etc.
___ awards to staff (such as Employee of the Month)
___ Field Museum fan mail
___ benefits (such as the Health Fair or news about insurance)
___ important notices of changes in the Museum, policies, current issues?
___ other -- specify below

5. What would you like to see changed in the *Natural News?*

6. What would you like to see stay the same in the *Natural News*?

7. Should the *Natural News* be:

___ abolished?
___ a community bulletin board?
___ a "feel good" about the Museum publication?
___ a no-frills listing of important notices of changes in the Museum, policies, current issues?
___ other

8. Is there another cultural institution or company whose staff newsletter you would recommend? (Please give name so that we can find and review.)

9. Any other comments?

9. ***Optional:*** List your department or area of work _____

10. ***Optional:*** Would you like to speak with the editor about your ideas for the *Natural News*?

Your Name_____ ext._____

Please return via Museum mail to Carolyn Klyce, Editor, Natural News.

LUTZONI RECEIVES NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION FUNDING

Assistant Curator **François Lutzoni** (Botany) was recently notified by the National Science Foundation (Division of Environmental Biology) that he has been awarded a total of $160,000 to support a research project entitled "Consequences of mutualism (lichenization) on the phylogeny and diversification of ascomycetes." The first objective of this proposal is to resolve the phylogenetic relationships among the main groups of lichenized and non-lichenized Ascomycota. The second main objective of this proposal is to establish the ancestry of lichen-forming ascomycetes relative to their non-lichenized counterpart. The third objective of this proposal is to reconstruct the origin and evolution of mutualism (lichenization) for the Ascomycota and test, using a comparative approach, the impact of lichenization on the extent diversity of specific groups of ascomycetes.

TRAVELS AND TALKS BY PRYER AND LUTZONI

Assistant Curators **Kathleen Pryer** and **François Lutzoni** (both Botany) were invited by Chris Haufler to give seminars at the University of Kansas on April 15 and 16. Kathleen gave a talk on "Integrating morphology and molecules in evolutionary studies of ferns" in the Department of Botany seminar series on April 15. Francois' presentation on "Origin of lichen symbiosis and its impact on fungal diversity and molecular evolution" was given in the Systematics and Evolution seminar series on April 16. Kathleen and Francois also attended an "Evolutionists" meeting on the evening of April 15, where Edith Taylor presented work on "Antarctic fossils." They met with several researchers at the Natural History Museum, including **Steve Ash** (former entomology curator at The Field Museum), Charles Michener, Robert Lichtwardt, Julian Humphries, Craig Martin, Ed Wiley, and Kris Krishtalka. Lutzoni was also invited to present his latest work on lichen symbiosis to the Department of Botany and Plant Pathology, Michigan State University from March 30 to April 1. This Department includes several researchers interested in host-pathogen systems. François met, among others, Jim Bier, Frans J. de Bruijn and Andrew M. Jarosz.

FLORIDA FIELD WORK

Associate Curator **Rüdiger Bieler** (Zoology, Invertebrates) recently returned from several weeks of fieldwork in Florida. For the first phase of his fieldwork Rüdiger concentrated on shallow water collecting of marine snails in southeastern Florida. This fieldwork was supported by a Smithsonian Institution Visitor's Award and allowed Rüdiger to use the excellent research facilities of the Smithsonian Marine Station in Ft. Pierce. Research Associate **Paula Mikkelsen** (Zoology, Invertebrates & AMNH curator) and graduate student **Roberto Cipriani** (University of Chicago) then joined him for the second phase of the field work consisting of shallow water collecting, by small boat dredging and SCUBA diving, in the Middle Florida Keys. The third phase of the trip, a scientific collecting cruise to the Dry Tortugas (westernmost tip of the Florida Keys), was organized by Research Associate **Tim Collins** (Zoology, Invertebrates and Florida International University, FIU). The main objective was to collect mollusks in depths between 40 and 200 meters for the ongoing morphological and molecular study under Rüdiger and Tim's

National Science Foundation grant. Joining them on their vessel, the 'Bellows', were several colleagues, including postdoctoral fellow Timothy Rawlings (FIU) and graduate student Rachel Collin (University of Chicago). Despite the relatively calm seas, some of the collecting gear was lost when dredge and trawl hit underwater obstructions in previously "uncollected" areas. The group got a crash course in sponge taxonomy with a trawl-load full of giant sponges that were identified as members of the species commonly known as the "Touch-Me-Not Sponge." In addition to numerous interesting species of gastropods, bivalves and cephalopods, collections were made of fishes, echinoderms, crustaceans and foraminiferans, all of which are now being studied and integrated into the collections of the participating institutions.

NOON BALLOON

The Noon Balloon presentation for Tuesday, May 13, 1997 was delivered by **Larry Heaney,** Associate Curator and Head, Division of Mammals, Field Museum. Larry discussed the major factors impinging upon endangered species in the Philippines. He developed an historic perspective to review the impact of prior events. These changes were compared with recent and on going events and then projected into future scenarios.

Bad news -- Recent changes in domestic legislation have stimulated mining companies to apply for permits to exploit nearly 25% of the total area of the country. These permit applications overlap with more than 50% of the area set aside as national parks and reserves. Other legislation intended to retain control of the potential economic benefit that might derive from the discovery of biologically beneficial compounds or pharmaceuticals of indigenous origin has severely curtailed all biological field work.

Good news -- Direct citizen involvement in biological conservation efforts is increasing rapidly. The level of public awareness of the need for and implementation of conservation programs is increasing. Government action to set aside newly proposed sites for biotic reserves is most positive. Larry noted that the Philippines is on a trajectory to become the first country in the world to implement a biogeographically based national park system.

INVITATION TO A POT LUCK

The Lesbian and Gay Museum Workers are having a pot luck lunch. Please join us!

Wednesday, May 21, 12 N - 1:00 p.m.

On the east lawn of the Field Museum (under the tall trees). -- Bring a dish to share.

Need more information? Call **Steve** (x336).

The *Natural News* is edited by **Carolyn Klyce** in the President's Office. The deadline for all submissions -- in WordPerfect on floppy disk or via email to klyce@fmppr.fmnh.org -- is Tuesday at noon. Printed on recycled paper.